

CRYSTAL CRUISES RETURNS TO BALTIMORE
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Luxury cruise line Crystal Cruises returns to Baltimore as Mid-Atlantic demand rises

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(also in Washington Business Journal)

Crystal Cruises will embark from Baltimore on an 11-day Caribbean cruise in November.

The luxury cruise line will depart from Baltimore Nov. 8 and set sail for destinations including Miami, several hot spots in the Caribbean, Charleston, S.C., and Norfolk, Va.

The 11-day segment is part of a longer cruise that originates in New York. All-inclusive packages start at \$3,700 per person.

It's the second time the ship, Crystal Serenity, will depart from Baltimore, and the cruise line's third time overall departing from Charm City.

"We developed this voyage in response to travelers' and agents' increasing demand for mid-Atlantic embarkations," Paul Girouard, Crystal's director of sales for the eastern United States, said in a statement.

"Baltimore has been so welcoming to us each time we've visited. We're excited to expand our offerings there for those who want to minimize air travel and start their Crystal experiences as quickly as possible."

Crystal's ship will embark from Baltimore just as Caribbean Cruise Line sends its departures out of Baltimore and relocates the Carnival Pride to Tampa, Fla.

Crystal Cruises is owned by the Tokyo-based shipping company Nippon Yusen Kaisha.

CRUISE INDUSTRY NEWS

Crystal Cruises to Offer One-Time Cruise From Maryland in November

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The Maryland Port Administration (MPA) today applauded the decision by Crystal Cruises to offer its first ever scheduled embarkation sailing from the Port of Baltimore onboard the Crystal Serenity on November 8, 2014.

The 11-day cruise will board passengers in New York on November 5 before arriving in Baltimore at approximately 8 am on November 8. The ship will welcome new passengers from Baltimore during the day and then sail from Maryland that evening. Continuing its voyage, the ship will sail down the East Coast, stopping in Norfolk and Charleston, before heading for the Caribbean and concluding the voyage in Miami.

"We are very pleased that Crystal Cruises has recognized this tremendous cruise market here in Maryland and offered a sailing from the Port of Baltimore," said Governor Martin O'Malley. "Today's announcement helps ensure that the 500 family-supporting jobs generated by cruise activity remain in one of the most in-demand cruise ports in the U.S."

Last year more than 212,000 passengers sailed on 90 cruises from the Port of Baltimore. The Port of Baltimore ranks fifth for cruise passengers among East Coast cruise ports, 11th in the U.S. and 20th in the world. Since beginning a year-round cruise schedule in 2009, nearly every cruise that has sailed from the Port of Baltimore has left at full passenger capacity.

“We developed this voyage in response to travelers’ and agents’ increasing demand for mid-Atlantic embarkations,” says Paul Girouard, Crystal’s director of sales for the eastern United States. “Baltimore has been so welcoming to us each time we’ve visited. We’re excited to expand our offerings there for those who want to minimize air travel and start their Crystal experiences as quickly as possible.”

Five hundred jobs are generated by cruise activity in Maryland, including 220 direct jobs at the Port of Baltimore. Additionally, Maryland benefits from \$90 million in economic activity generated by cruise activities. The economic value to Maryland takes into consideration such factors as local spending, hotels, dining and entertainment.

The Port of Baltimore’s cruise terminal is 2.5 miles from Baltimore’s world famous Inner Harbor and 10 miles from BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport. Maryland’s median household income of \$70,004 is the highest in the U.S. Baltimore is also located within a four-hour drive of eight of the ten wealthiest counties in the U.S. The Baltimore-Washington DC-Northern Virginia region is recognized as one of the most affluent in the nation.